

NWSChat Setup Guide

for Media Partners

National Weather Service, Peachtree City, Georgia

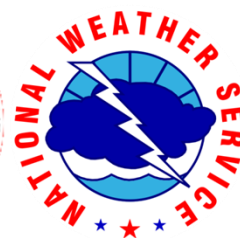
NWSChat is an instant messaging program utilized by NWS operational personnel to share critical warning decision expertise and other types of significant weather information essential to the NWS's mission of saving lives and property. Information is exchanged in real-time with the media community, who in turn play a key role in communicating the NWS's hazardous weather messages to the public. Additionally, these partners can relay significant event reports back to the NWS operational personnel who use this information to make effective warning decisions. NWSChat also serves as an efficient means of seeking clarifications and enhancements to the communication stream originating from the NWS during a fast-paced significant weather event.



Working together to save lives and protect property.

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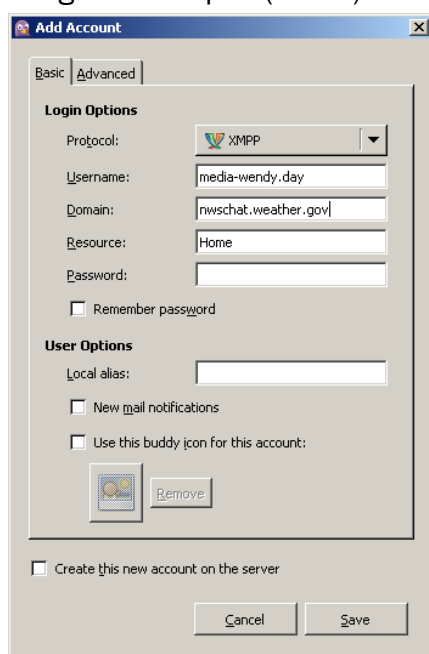
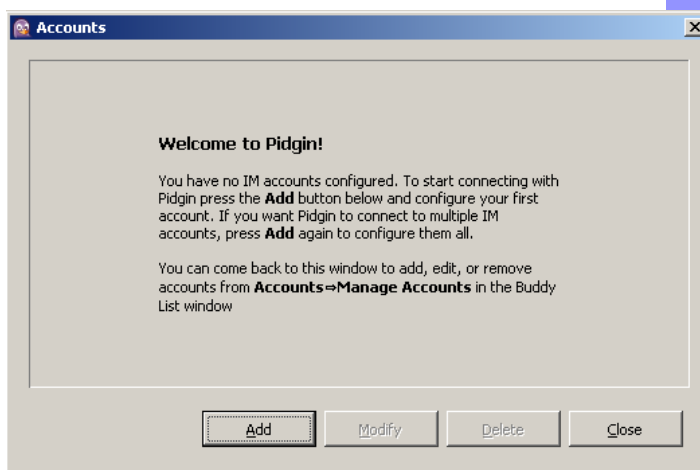
Getting Started

To request a NWSChat Account for NWS Partners, go to <https://nwschat.weather.gov/create.php>. Be sure you save your username and password during this process to ease your NWSChat setup.

Next, download a supported instant messaging and chat application. For Microsoft Windows computers, Pidgin is suggested. (For non-Windows users, see NWSChat website for instructions). The Pidgin software can be obtained from <http://www.pidgin.im>.

Account Configuration

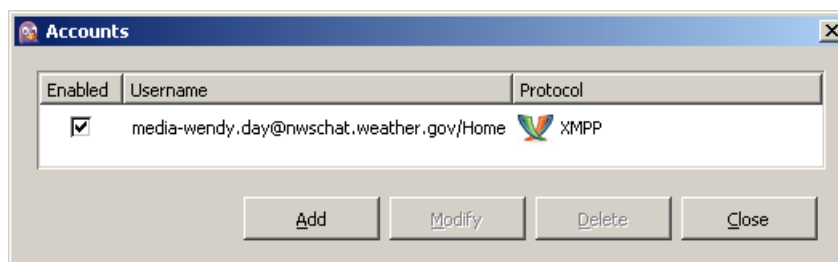
Once Pidgin is successfully installed, start the program through the “Start” menu, or the desktop icon. Upon starting, the user will see an “Add Accounts” dialog box (right). Select the “Add” button to enter your NWSChat Account information. A new dialog box will open (below).



Under Login Options, in the drop down box labeled Protocol, select “**XMPP.**” Next, enter your username established during NWSChat account setup. In the example, media partner Wendy Day has used “media-wendy.day” as her **NWSChat username**. The domain will always be “**nwschat.weather.gov**”. The resource field can be left as the default “Home”, or instead use “Office” or some other single-word description. For the password, it is recommended as a best practice to leave the field here blank. If the user elects to fill in this box, this field will have to be updated every 60 days when the password expires.

Password Note: Although the NWSChat password will have to be entered each time Pidgin starts, by leaving the password blank, the security of NWSChat is maintained.

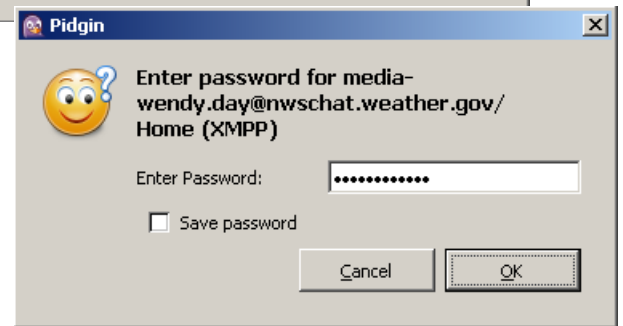
Once these information fields are completed, select “Save”. The “Accounts” window opens (right). Verify “Enabled” is select next to the created account, and click “Close”.



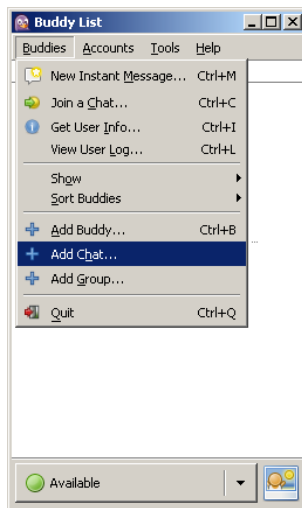
The next dialog box to display will prompt the user to accept the security certificate. Click “Accept”.

If the password field was left blank during the account setup, the next window will ask the user to provide the password for the given NWSChat username. Once the password is entered, select “OK”.

Pidgin will now log into NWSChat. The login process could take as long as 15 to 20 seconds.



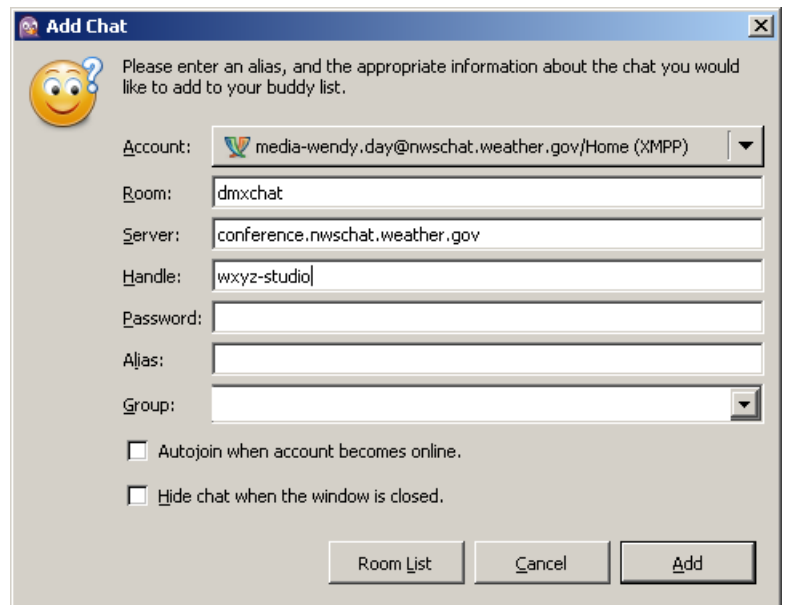
Joining a Chatroom



Once log in is completed, the Pidgin “Buddy List” will open. The first time a user starts Pidgin, they must add the NWS chatroom. To do this click the “Buddies” menu and select “Add chat” (left).

In the “Add Chat” window (right), select the appropriate user account in the drop down box. In the room field, enter “**ffcchat**”.

The server will always be “**conference.nwschat.weather.gov**”.



A suggested best practice is to check the box for "Autojoin when account becomes online". In this manner, the chatroom will always open when you sign into NWSChat with Pidgin.

For Frequently Asked Questions, Help, Documentation, Tools, or to reset your password, go to

<https://nwschat.weather.gov>

The handle is the user’s id that will be displayed in the chatroom. Media partners should use this format: **call sign - position, location, name**. In addition to the example above, Wendy Day could also use wxyz-wendy.day, or wxyz-meteorologist.

Once this information is entered, select “Add”. The NWSChat account is now successfully configured.